

# MARCH 2026 NEWSLETTER

## CHURCH OF THE HOLY GHOST



### NAVIGATING THE WATERS OF INCULTURATION:

#### How the Catholic Church Balances Cultural Integration and Avoids Syncretism

##### INTRODUCTION

The Catholic Church has long sought to evangelize and spread its teachings

across diverse cultures and communities worldwide.

This mission often involves a process called *\*inculturation\**, wherein the Church integrates elements of local cultures into its liturgical practices and expressions of faith.

Inculturation aims to make the Gospel more understandable and relatable to different cultures while ensuring that these cultural elements do not compromise the Church's core doctrines and teachings.

However, this balancing act between inculturation and the risk of *\*syncretism\**—the blending of different religious beliefs and practices that may dilute or contradict Catholic doctrine—is a complex, ongoing process.

##### THE PRINCIPLES OF INCULTURATION IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Inculturation involves two primary movements

1. **INTEGRATION:** Adapting the external forms and expressions of the faith (e.g., language, music, art) to align with local cultures, thus making the Gospel message more accessible and relatable to local populations.
2. **TRANSFORMATION:** Allowing the Gospel to challenge and transform aspects of the local culture that may conflict with Christian teachings, while still respecting the culture's intrinsic value and integrity.

To successfully achieve inculturation, the Catholic Church adheres to specific principles to ensure that cultural adaptation does not lead to syncretism:

- **Fidelity to the Gospel:** The Church must remain faithful to the core tenets of Catholic faith and morals. Any integration of cultural elements must not alter or contradict these foundational beliefs.
- **Discernment and Dialogue:** The process of inculturation requires careful discernment and open dialogue with local communities to understand their cultural symbols, practices, and beliefs.

This dialogue helps the Church identify which cultural elements can be harmoniously integrated and which may need to be modified or excluded.

- **Gradual Integration:**

Inculturation is often a gradual process that requires patience and ongoing reflection.

The Church must continually assess how cultural adaptations impact the faith community and whether these adaptations enhance or hinder the understanding of the Gospel.

##### AVOIDING SYNCRETISM: Challenges and Controversial Examples

While inculturation aims to respect and incorporate local cultures, avoiding syncretism is a significant challenge.

Syncretism can occur when elements of local beliefs or practices are integrated into the faith in ways that alter the core teachings of Catholicism.

Here are some controversial examples that highlight this delicate balance:

##### 1. THE PACHAMAMA STATUES AT THE AMAZON SYNOD

▪**Background:** During the Amazon Synod in 2019, statues representing Pachamama, a figure revered by some indigenous Amazonian communities as a Mother Earth deity, were included in some synod-related ceremonies in Rome.

The intent was to acknowledge and respect the spiritual worldview of the Amazonian peoples, particularly their connection to nature, which aligns with Catholic teachings on creation and stewardship.

▪**Controversy:** The inclusion of the Pachamama statues sparked significant debate within the Church.

Critics argued that the statues represented a form of syncretism, incorporating pagan religious symbols into Catholic worship. They feared that this could confuse the faithful and undermine the Church's teaching on the uniqueness of God and the worship due to Him alone.

▪**Church's Response:** The Vatican clarified that the statues were not being worshipped as deities but were symbols of life, fertility, and the environment, which are not inherently at odds with Catholic teachings.

However, the controversy highlighted the need for clearer communication and catechesis on what constitutes appropriate cultural adaptation and what might verge into syncretism.

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## 2. THE INCULTURATION OF ANCESTOR VENERATION IN ASIA

▪Background: In many Asian cultures, ancestor veneration is a deeply ingrained practice, reflecting respect for familial lineage and continuity.

When Catholic missionaries first arrived in Asia, they encountered these practices and sought ways to integrate them into the Christian understanding of honoring the

deceased without implying ancestor worship.

▪Controversy: The challenge arose in differentiating between veneration (deep respect) and worship (adoration due to God alone).

Some missionaries allowed local customs of ancestor veneration to continue, interpreting them as expressions of respect rather than religious acts of worship.

Others feared that these practices could lead to syncretism, where ancestors could be seen as divine intermediaries or deities.

▪Church's Response: The Church's approach has been to clarify that prayers and Masses for the deceased, as well as practices like placing offerings on graves, can be understood within the Christian context as acts of remembrance and respect.

However, the Church rejects any interpretation that elevates ancestors to divine status or mediators of grace.

This nuanced approach aims to respect cultural customs while upholding the unique mediation of Christ and the communion of saints.

## 3. AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGIONS AND CATHOLICISM

▪Background: In Africa, Catholic missionaries encountered various traditional religious practices, such as the use of ritual dances, drums, and offerings. These elements were deeply embedded in the social and religious life of the people.

▪Controversy: Some elements of traditional African religions, such as ritual sacrifices or invocations of spirits, directly conflict with Catholic teachings.

The challenge was to discern which cultural expressions could be harmonized with Catholic liturgy (e.g., using drums and dance in Mass) and which needed to be abandoned or transformed (e.g., substituting animal sacrifices with the Eucharist as the true sacrificial offering).

▪Church's Response: The Church has permitted the integration of certain cultural expressions, like traditional music and dance, into the liturgy, provided they enhance worship and do not contradict Catholic doctrine.

However, the Church is cautious about any practices that could be interpreted as invoking spirits or deities, which would conflict with the belief in the One True God.

This careful discernment process continues as African Catholic communities grow and develop their unique liturgical expressions.

## THE LONG-TERM PROCESS OF INCULTURATION

Inculturation is not a one-time event but a continuous process that requires the Church to remain vigilant and adaptable.

Here's how the Church approaches this long-term process:

1. ONGOING THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION: The Church continually reflects on the theological implications of inculturated practices, ensuring they remain faithful to Catholic doctrine.

This reflection often involves input from local bishops, theologians, and the Vatican to maintain doctrinal unity.

2. EDUCATION AND CATECHESIS: Proper catechesis is essential to prevent syncretism.

Educating the faithful about the meaning of inculturated practices helps ensure that these practices are understood within the context of Catholic faith and not as endorsements of non-Christian beliefs.

3. EVALUATION AND ADAPTATION: The Church regularly evaluates the impact of inculturated practices on the faith community. If a practice is found to cause confusion or lead to syncretism, the Church may adapt or discontinue it.

4. CULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND RESPECT: The Church remains sensitive to the cultural contexts in which it operates, recognizing that inculturation is a dialogue between the Gospel and local cultures.

The goal is to enrich the local Church's expression of faith without compromising its doctrinal integrity.

## CONCLUSION

The Catholic Church's efforts to balance inculturation and avoid syncretism reflect its commitment to evangelization that respects and elevates diverse cultures.

By adhering to principles of fidelity to the Gospel, discernment, and gradual integration, the Church seeks to make the faith accessible and meaningful to people worldwide.

The controversies surrounding practices like the Pachamama statues, ancestor veneration, and African traditional religions illustrate the challenges and complexities of this process.

Ultimately, inculturation is a dynamic, ongoing journey that requires careful navigation to uphold the universality and doctrinal purity of the Catholic faith.



# LENT/EASTER 2026



## Rosary:

Monday-Thursday at 9:00AM  
First Friday at 9:00AM  
Thursdays at 7:00PM



## Stations of the Cross:

Fridays 6:00PM  
March 6, 13, 20, 27

HOLY GHOST PARISH  
CHILDREN AGES 2-10

# EASTER EGG HUNT

SATURDAY, APRIL 4 AT 11:00 AM  
FOLLOWING THE BASKET BLESSING AT 10:00 AM  
SOUTHWEST SIDE OF CHURCH

**REGISTER ONLINE!**

QUESTIONS?  
EMAIL  
SARALASICA316@GMAIL.COM



## Reconciliation:

Held at: Immaculate Conception Church  
132 Arthur St., Elmhurst  
630-530-8515

Saturday, March 21, from  
8:00AM to 3:00PM.

(Instead of individual parishes having penance services, this Deanery Reconciliation event is offered for you to attend.)

**There will be no confessions at Holy Ghost on Saturday, March 21.**

## Holy Week:

### Palm Sunday Mass:

March 28 Mass 4:00PM  
March 29 Masses  
8:00AM and 10:30AM



### Holy Thursday:

April 2  
7:00PM - Mass  
8:00PM - Midnight  
Adoration of the Blessed  
Sacrament (Emmaus Room)



### Good Friday Services:

April 3 3:00PM



### Holy Saturday:

April 4  
10:00AM - Basket Blessing  
11:00AM - Easter Egg Hunt  
7:00PM - Vigil Mass

### Easter Sunday:

April 5 Masses  
8:00AM and 10:30AM



# FAITH FORMATION

Ritual III, the Blessing of the Senses takes place at the 4:00 p.m. Mass on 3/14 and at the 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Masses on 3/15 for all those receiving First Holy Eucharist or Confirmation and their parents.



At the last Family Faith Day on February 1, the Faith Formation families made Valentines for Seniors at the Radcliff Residence and for seniors in the Illinois 24th District. The Valentines are a way to bring cheer to local seniors. During the Family Faith Day, the Faith Formation families also made over 160 "blessing bags" for those in need. A huge thank you to everyone that donated items for the bags which included hats, gloves, snacks, toiletries and gift cards.

Remember that Holy Ghost Parish has an on-going food drive to help stock the Wood Dale food pantry. Please bring non-perishable canned, boxed and bagged food items for the Wood Dale food pantry. We are all called to help those in need, and we are hoping to collect a prodigious number of items over the 40 days of Lent. This is a great way to show your love for others as you help those in need.



CRS Rice Bowl is the Lenten program of Catholic Relief Services, the official relief and development agency of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. CRS is celebrating their 51st anniversary this year as it eases suffering and aids people in need. May the Eucharist continue to transform our lives and help us respond to God's call to serve our global family. Rooted in the history of the Eucharistic Congress, CRS Rice Bowl invites Catholics and faith communities to encounter God and our global family throughout Lent by practicing the pillars of prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Lenten alms donated through CRS Rice Bowl support the work of CRS in more than 120 different countries each year. Twenty-five percent of donations to CRS Rice Bowl stay in the local diocese, supporting hunger and poverty alleviation efforts. CRS Rice Bowls will be given out to all Faith Formation families and are in the narthex for all parishioners. They can be turned in on Palm Sunday, 3/29, or you can donate online at [crsricebowl.org/donate](http://crsricebowl.org/donate).

Please continue to pray for our OCIA and OCIC Candidates (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults and Order of Christian Initiation of Children) as they continue to learn more about the Roman Catholic faith. Holy Ghost Parish has three (3) Candidates that will receive their Sacraments of Initiation on Holy Saturday.

Rejoice in the Lord always,  
Nancy Siemers  
Director of Faith Formation

"Be generous to the poor orphans and those in need. The man to whom our Lord has been liberal ought not to be stingy. We shall one day find in Heaven as much rest and joy as we ourselves have dispensed in this life." - St. Ignatius of Loyola

## Lenten Disciplines of Fasting & Abstinence

Catholics in good health ages 18 to 59 are required to fast and to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

Fasting consists of eating only one meal, with the possibility of two smaller snacks that do not add up to a single full meal.

Catholics age 14 and older are to abstain from meat on all Fridays in Lent.

## Lenten Journey Prayer

Draw us closer to You, Lord, these 40 Days.

Make our actions kinder,  
our words more merciful,  
our decisions more like Yours.

Teach us what it means to be Your children,  
one day at a time.

Amen.

©LPi



## Defending the Most Vulnerable

Knights protect. Whether standing up for the voiceless at a March for Life, supporting those with special needs or giving mothers and babies practical assistance after birth, we affirm human dignity and lend our volunteer hours, donations and other resources to building a culture of life.



More than 2,000 ultrasound machines donated



\$17M+ in practical aid to mothers and babies after pregnancy



Proud partner of the National March for Life in the U.S. and Canada



\$5 million donated to Special Olympics in the past year



Aid given to more than 2,000 pregnancy resource centers and maternity homes



# KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS®

**BECOME A MEMBER!**

Fr. Sam and Deacon Robbie urge you to join the Holy Ghost Knights of Columbus.

Be a part of the world's largest Catholic fraternal organization.

Over the last year, we welcomed more than 96,000 new Knights of Columbus. And all told, we now have more than 2,100,000 members. They are spread across 17,000 councils in North America, Europe, and Asia.

You can join online at

<https://www.kofc.org/get-involved/join-kofc/>  
or call Warren Wawczak 630-487-7925

- ◆ Knights put their faith into action every day to make life better in their parishes and communities.
- ◆ We offer men the opportunity to grow in their faith while helping others and supporting the Church, and to become better Catholics, husbands and fathers.
- ◆ The Knights of Columbus annually contributes nearly \$190 million to worthy charitable causes around the world, and our members donate nearly 47 million hours of their time.
- ◆ Our founder – Blessed Michael McGivney – has been beatified by the Church. People around the world seek his intercession through prayer.
- ◆ All practicing Catholic men 18 years or older are invited to join.

## I Thirst

A Guided Meditation with Mother Teresa



When Jesus said, "I thirst" on the cross he wasn't talking about wanting water. He was talking about thirsting for you! Please come to our CCW sponsored Holy Hour based on the Reflections of St. Mother Teresa and her meditations on Jesus' great love for us.

Lenten Holy Hour and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Tuesday, March 24, 2026  
at 7 PM in the Church

Followed by an "Evening of Fellowship" sponsored by the Holy Ghost Council of Catholic Women.

Light Refreshments will be provided.

We will be electing the CCW Woman of the Year.

Please join us.



## Holy Ghost Church

*Is proud to celebrate the  
Feast Day of St. Joseph  
with a St. Joseph Table*

*Celebrate a Wonderful Tradition with Us*

### Sunday March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Celebration Starts at 8:00am and ends at 12:30pm

We are in the planning stages of this event. If you would like to be a Volunteer, Sponsor or make a monetary or food donation, please call us at:

Nancy @ 630-673-7906

or

Antoinette @ 630-802-5535

*Monetary and Food donations will also be accepted on the day of the event at the door.*



### 7 Hours of Confession

When was the last time you received Reconciliation?  
Was it recently? In the past year?

**You are invited to prepare your heart and soul for Easter.**

The priests of Eastern DuPage County will be available to celebrate the Sacrament of Forgiveness of Sin!

**Saturday, March 21 from 8am until 3pm**

There will be select times when the Sacrament will be offered in Polish and Spanish.

**All Catholics are invited to receive God's grace**

Immaculate Conception Church  
132 Arthur St.  
Elmhurst, IL  
630-530-8515

### Lenten Opportunities In the Eastern DuPage Deanery Parishes

#### Immaculate Conception, Elmhurst

Parish Mission, March 2, 3, and 4, 7PM

Father Tom McCarthy presents "Jesus: The Center of Joy and Joy of Our Lives"

#### Christ the King, Lombard

Lenten Mission, March 5, 7PM

"Friendship with Jesus," presented by Dr. Mary Amore

#### St. Peter, Itasca

Passion of Christ, 3/1, 3PM

A live theatrical performance on Christ's Passion, presented in the Church, free admission

Passion of Christ Evening of Reflection, 3/2

6PM Confession

7PM Reflection/Discussion on the Passion of Christ

#### Sacred Heart, Lombard

Parish Mission, 2/22, 2/23, and 2/24, 7PM

Fr. John Honiotes will speak on deepening a relationship with Christ through Prayer.

On 2/24, Father's presentation will be followed by Adoration, Confession and a Reception.

#### Ascension of our Lord, Oakbrook Terrace

Lenten Soup Luncheon following the 12PM Mass – Fridays

#### Holy Ghost, Wood Dale

Stations of the Cross, 6PM, Fridays of Lent

#### St. Andrew Kim, Itasca

Stations of the Cross every Friday

Violinist to play during Stations

On March 8 there will be a Lenten music retreat titled, "Classical Music Sings the Faith." The retreat will begin at 12:50 pm featuring Violinist Claudia Sooyeon Kim. The pieces to be performed are Mission, Lord, Your Servant, Thais Meditation, Prayer of Peace, Someone Is Praying for You, Gounod Ave Maria, When the Lord Calls My Name, and Amazing.

**CRS RICE BOWL**

WHO IS READY TO  
**CHANGE LIVES** THIS LENT?

¡CAMBIA VIDAS ESTA CUARESMA!

Scan the QR code to make a donation.  
Escanear el código QR para donar.

[crsricebowl.org/solidarity](https://crsricebowl.org/solidarity) | [crsplatodearroz.org/solidaridad](https://crsplatodearroz.org/solidaridad)

Pick up your rice bowl in the narthex. Return it with your change on Palm Sunday. Or scan the QR code to donate.

WITH JOYFUL HEARTS,  
WE WELCOME OUR  
NEWLY BAPTIZED.

ALEXANDRA ELYANNA GONZALES  
VINCENT JAMES MITURA

WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY

IN LOVING  
MEMORY

DEARLY DEPARTED

MARTHA LELENA HOLIDAY  
11/25/1969 - 12/10/2025

JOSEPH MICHAEL DICIOLLA  
3/10/1947 - 10/23/2025

MARY NASTI  
8/9/1948 - 2/6/2026

DAVID DIAZ  
12/30/1933 - 2/10/2026

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,  
and may the perpetual light shine upon  
them. May the souls of all the faithful  
departed, through the mercy of  
God, rest in peace.



**ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION**

My Jesus,  
I believe that You are present  
in the Most Holy Sacrament.  
I love You above all things,  
and I desire to receive You into my soul.  
Since I cannot at this moment  
receive You sacramentally,  
come at least spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace You as if You were already there  
and unite myself wholly to You.  
Never permit me to be separated from You.  
Amen.



**Mass Intention Information**  
**\$10 stipend per Mass Intention.**

Mass Intention requests, in compliance  
with the Decree on Mass Stipends, began on  
January 1, 2016: There will be one intention  
for a Mass. Mass will be offered for all  
parishioners in the parish on Christmas Eve,  
Christmas Day, Holy Thursday, Easter Vigil,  
Easter Sunday, and Holy Days of Obligation.  
No other intentions will be taken  
for the Masses on these days.

**WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULE**

4 pm Saturday  
8 am Sunday  
10:30 am Sunday

**DAILY MASS**

8:30 am Mon-Thurs

**FIRST FRIDAY**

8:30 am



PLEASE JOIN  
THE KNIGHTS OF  
COLUMBUS  
TO PRAY THE ROSARY  
AFTER THE 10:30 AM  
MASS ON SUNDAY, MARCH 8, 2026



PLEASE JOIN US  
TO PRAY THE ROSARY  
MONDAY THROUGH  
THURSDAY  
AT 9 AM AND ON  
THURSDAY  
EVENINGS AT 7PM.

Lord, we ask you to bless all those who  
serve; grant your heavenly protection to  
these brave men and women. Please give  
them and their loved ones strength and  
peace. Amen.

**AIR FORCE:**

LT COL Anthony Calabrese  
LT COL Patty Calabrese  
MAJ Mary Dones  
CAPT Joseph Piscopo  
MAJ Jeremy Shimanek  
1st LT Joshua Jalowiec  
SSGT Robert W. Dones  
SSGT Timothy Latvis  
SRA Randall Petrbock  
A1C Ryan Leider  
A1C Nicholas Pfeifer  
A2C James Kochanski III

**ARMY:**

LTC Robert Bowen  
LTC Grace Gallagher  
CAPT Elizabeth Gonzales  
SFC Zack Cieslak  
SPC Marco Garcia  
SPC David Patcher  
CW4 Anderson Mann  
CW2 Carlos Contreras  
PVT Steven Badgley  
PVT Ian Schauchuk

**MARINE CORPS:**

CAPT Edward W. Miller  
SGT Nicholas Reid  
SGT Jack Rowley  
LCPL Michele Giuseppe Bottalico  
LCPL Vincent Anthony Eltman  
PVT Cameron Andresen  
PVT Gabriel Leon  
PVT Billy Termine

**NAVY:**

LCDR Nicholas Lucania  
Ryan James Ruizol

**LET US PRAY FOR THE SICK  
OF OUR PARISH**

Cathy Alcozer  
Bianca Marie Borowski  
Michael Brann  
Micah Casey  
Ady DeLargarza  
Aldegunda Diego  
Thomas Franzen  
Izcoatl Garcia Gonzales  
Mike Kaiser  
Sarah Kasab  
Jerad Klint  
Therese Kotecki  
Michael Malek  
Jose Joaquin Negrete Paz  
Cindi Shea  
Frank Staggs  
Holly Staggs  
Nancy Townsend  
Larry Venere  
Feliciano Vero  
Gloria Villanueva  
Salvatore Vivo  
Joe Vocino  
Matt Vocino  
Joseph Yello  
Cyndi Zwadlo

**And for those listed in our parish  
book of prayers.**

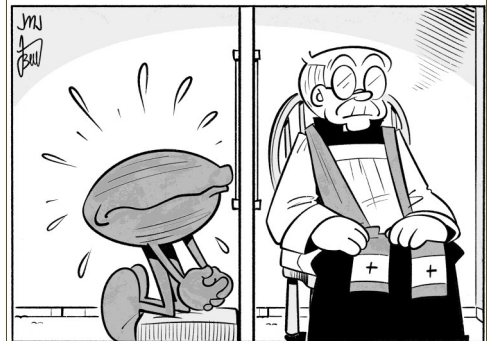
**Military and Prayer List**

Please email:  
hgbulletin@holyghostparish.org  
or call the parish office at 630-860-2975  
to add or remove a name from the list.  
**Thank you!**

**Prayer for the Sick**

For those in pain and in sorrow,  
God be their comfort.  
For caretakers and medical staff,  
God give them grace.  
Surround those afflicted with Your  
love, care, and mercy, You who are  
our healing and our hope. Amen.  
©LPI

**"Why did the clam go to confession?"**



**"Because he had been shellfish."**

**FUN FACT!**  
Lent is a penitential season. It is a time for us to be  
sorry for our many faults against God and to repent  
and amend to do better. The way we best do this is  
by going to the Sacrament of Confession where we  
receive forgiveness for our sins.